



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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Register of Teachers for Secondary Schools (Swan, Sonnenschein, 2/-). No doubt it may be useful to all concerned to have the official list of teachers for secondary schools readily available for reference.

The Delightful Reading Box, prepared by Miss Mason (School Depôt, West Norwood, London, S.E., 1/6). Do our readers remember that many years ago we published one or two articles called *A First Reading Lesson* in the *Parents' Review*? These First Reading Lessons required an arrangement of separate words which would make up into poems or sentences in order that children should acquire the knowledge of a certain number of words at sight. A friend of education, the late Miss J. Miller, published a *Pussy Box* for us with the loose words of the several verses of *I like little Pussy*, put into beautifully sewn little cases, the words of one verse in a case. This was followed by one or two more little poems arranged in the same way. But, alas, these little boxes are no longer to be had. Therefore it was particularly delightful to us to receive *The Delightful Reading Box* from Miss Mason, with envelopes containing *Our Shop*, *The Fisher Boy* and sundry other rhymes, each with its own words and separate letters, and instructions for using them, very much on the lines of those in the papers we refer to. We strongly recommend the use of *The Delightful Reading Box*, and only wish that Miss Mason had given it a more engaging title.

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by Miss F. NOËL ARMFIELD, Sec., 26, Victoria Street, S.W.
Tel. 479 Victoria.

To whom all Hon. Local Secs. are requested to send reports of all matters of interest connected with their branches, also 6 copies of any prospectuses or other papers they may print.

N.B.—Kindly write on one side of the paper only.

NEW BRANCHES.

The Executive Committee has been approached with a view to starting Branches in the following places:—

BRADFORD.

CARDIFF.—Names may be sent to Mrs. Hamilton, Blackladies, Dynas Powis.

DUNFERMLINE.—Mrs. Beveridge, Pitreavie, Dunfermline, would be glad to hear from people interested.

NOTTINGHAM.

SURBITON.

SWANSEA.

Readers of the *Parents' Review* living in these districts, or having friends there, are asked to communicate with Miss Armfield, 26, Victoria Street, S.W.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA.—On the 11th August a meeting was held in the Schoolroom of Christ Church, South Yarra, to inaugurate a branch of the P.N.E.U. in the Southern suburbs of Melbourne. Mr. J. T. Collins, M.A., LL.B., delivered an address on the aims and objects of the Union, and an audience of between fifty and sixty were present. The Rev. — Kirkland took the chair, and at the close a committee was formed and thirty ladies and gentlemen enrolled as members.

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"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

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THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP OF MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS.*

BY M. WOLSELEY-LEWIS,

Head Mistress of the Graham Street High School, London.

I FEEL that I owe you an apology in coming to address mothers on the subject of mothers and daughters. But if I can claim no experience as a mother, I can do so as a daughter, in my own person—and that of the very many daughters whom I know intimately. I must plead guilty in this address to considering the question from the daughter's point of view—though I recognise very clearly that there is another side—which indeed I have very often to put in speaking, as I more often do, to the daughters. My own ideal of the relationship I owe entirely to my own mother, and as I have come to know through other daughters the many difficulties which may beset it, I can only be increasingly grateful for my own happier experience and anxious to make it possible for others.

It is surely true, as Dante has said in his *Vita Nuova*, that "no other friendship is like unto that between a good parent and a good child." It is all the more sad that this friendship is so often lacking—and perhaps (though it is difficult to

* An Address given to the Forest Hill Branch of the P.N.E.U.

judge of this) more often in the present generation than formerly. Nor is this failure only so in the case of frivolous and neglectful mothers. These have, no doubt, always existed; it is certainly true that they exist now—perhaps chiefly among the extremes of society, the very rich and fashionable, who are occupied in their own pleasures and pursuits, or the very poor, busied more excusably with the gaining of a livelihood. But these are not the mothers who always receive least affection; I know several cases where a mother, after long neglect, having turned ever so little to the daughter, has received full affection and has been the subject of a yearning admiration all along. For though neglect may lead to a hardening of the child's character, real disaster seems more often to follow incompatibility of temper, aggravated by mismanagement—very often in the direction of over-attention and over-indulgence. Moreover, to speak of neglect in this audience would only be to discuss the failures of those who cannot be here. Parents who belong to the P.N.E.U. are not likely to be found in that category. I would rather therefore discuss the cases where with love and respect on the one side and love and conscientious care on the other the results are still not happy. It is strange that there should be such, yet they do exist, and I would speak with special reference to the time which is that of strain and test, I mean the difficult time when a girl has just left school or the school-room. I remember that the daughter of most delightful and good parents, whom she loves and admires, said to me that she had no intimate friend in her own family, unless it were possibly her father, and that she could only think of one of her many girl friends who was on terms of real friendship with her mother. She longed to please her mother and tried to do so with an all too conscious effort. On the other hand, I think of another daughter, of very much less noteworthy parents, who told me shortly after her marriage that her husband had become a member of her family more than she of his, and that it was so with all her married sisters. The happiness and intimacy of all their home-life, parents and children, mothers and sisters, was a revelation to the husbands. Why are there these differences and how can the ideal relation be established?

I believe the first point is *to determine what the ideal relationship is*—and I think much of the present difficulty is due to the fact that we live in an age of transition, when the old formal relationship with its ceremonial curtsies, its title of sir or madam, has been swept away and nothing has been generally and permanently put in its place. It has been said to me that American parents and children understand one another better, and that in the best American homes there is at once more real familiarity than is often allowed in England with greater ceremony in public relations. The English home custom varies so widely that neither parents nor children seem always to know on what terms they want to stand.

Personally, I do not believe in sisterly relations between mothers and daughters, though for different individuals there may be different possibilities. But it seems to leave nothing to grow up into, and I think it often endangers the other family relationships. A friend of mine who boasts that her mother is like a dear sister, does not look upon her father as a brother, nor indeed as anything but an inconvenient third, who is not expected, except as an occasional visitor, to frequent the private sitting-room which she and her mother share. Such a reversal of right precedence in the family must surely end in disaster for mother and daughter. The sisterly relation seems to me to preclude also the sort of respect which I believe to be a first essential in a happy relationship between child and parent. And I think that neglectful mothers may succeed in retaining the affection lost to more anxious and conscientious ones, when through their personal qualities they may rouse in their daughters admiration and respect.

Moreover, a mother should claim her own position, lest she deprive her daughter of opportunities of learning the joy of unselfish giving by usurping it all for herself. It is said that unselfish mothers make selfish children. I do not think that this is so if the mothers are *really* unselfish, but I do think that many mothers indulge themselves by giving their children pleasure at the moment, at the expense of their own best principles—just as many people indulge their emotions by giving money heedlessly to undeserving beggars. It is a truism to say that in so doing they do not consult the real

happiness of their daughters, for whom, as for themselves, it is true that

" they who make
Pleasure their only end—
Ordering the whole life for its sake,
Miss that whereto they tend.

"While they who bid stern Duty lead,
Content to follow—they
Of Duty only taking heed,
Find Pleasure on the way."

Such mothers do not really observe the golden rule of doing-as-one-would-be-done-by; and with the best intentions exclude their daughters from one of the greatest privileges of family life—the sharing the common sorrows as well as joys.

And while I do not think the precise amount or form of discipline matters much, I think the principle of discipline in early days, which may grow later into the cultivation of self-discipline, is as essential to the happiness as to the character of the child. I would urge all mothers to be *definite* in what they expect of their daughters in matters of principle, in the home-life and without; to be definite, for instance, as to whether they wish them to have a career of their own or to remain at home, and to bring them up accordingly, not making many rules, but absolutely enforcing those made. This gives the child a sense of security, while shifting ideals only perplex and irritate. And whatever authority is exercised, it is essential that it should be not only unhesitating, but *both just and magnanimous*. All children resent injustice: it will be remembered how in later life the great St. Augustine still remembered with an almost absurd sense of grievance the injustice of his first schoolmaster. On the other hand, very few resent a just severity, nor do children as a rule respect or even like an authority not sufficiently severe in judgment to make them feel the presence of a high standard and strong will. The ideals of the young, especially of young girls, are as high as those of their elders and they are far more merciless and intolerant. It is often a real disappointment to them to find failures condoned for which they do not really excuse themselves. Therefore I should say that it does not matter how severe a mother may be, *provided* (and this is a large provision) that the *child knows that she really loves her and cares for her*

interest and interests above all else. So long as this love and care is there I do not think its demonstration at all important; To the English nature over-demonstration often leads to satiety and the natural English girl is reserved about her deepest feelings. If mother and daughter always address each other as "sweetheart" or "dearest," it is often a sign of a desire to give in appearance an affection which cannot be counted on, But this is, of course, very much a matter of temperament.

Mothers often seem to me not jealous enough in some cases, too jealous in others—not jealous enough with regard to the prerogatives of authority and influence which they are astonishingly willing to delegate to others. They will come to a teacher or friend and ask her to use her influence with their daughters in matters which affect the home-life only, *e.g.*, in the time taken to go to bed. This surely is a great confession of weakness, not only to themselves and the friend consulted, but also, were the position accepted, to the girl. On the other hand, some mothers are disastrously jealous where there is no excuse for being so. It is above all things desirable that mothers should be the daughters' first confidantes, but confidences cannot be forced. A girl goes to school or meets some young married woman of whom she makes a friend. She falls greatly in love with the mistress or friend and is inseparable, devoted, no doubt silly. But the matter is probably entirely temporary, and there is no more need for the mother to be jealous than she was of the nurse to whom the child preferred to go as a baby. If the mother will wait patiently, if, further, she will herself make a friend of the object of the girl's admiration, if she will school herself to hear her disproportionate eulogies, the friendship will sink into its right proportion and will take its temporary or permanent place in the family life; and the girl, feeling herself treated with generosity, will as she grows up respond with equal generosity, and school her enthusiasms so as not to burden her family. Here is room for the exercise of *the* virtue which I believe to be most necessary to friendship between people of different ages always, whether mother and daughter or not, and indeed to the best friendship of every kind—I mean magnanimity. It is very difficult perhaps for parents to respect and foster the development of individuality in their

children, yet surely it is a real duty, and every mother owes it to her children to help them to work out their *own* salvation. A mother cannot, if she would, make her daughter's character an exact copy of her own or of the ideal she most admires. "A wise parent will rather discover what his child is than make him what he would have him to be." The mother will reap her reward in a much more interesting and more real companionship in later life. Meanwhile, she must allow her daughter independent pursuits, even those with which she has little sympathy naturally, claiming from her interest in her own occupations and giving the same in return. To do this well will be difficult, because the mother will have to enter into the new ideals, hopes and fears of a generation younger than her own. The daughter cannot without experience reach the older point of view, but the mother may by freshness and enthusiasm reach the younger. I would suggest that this can be done at least in two ways; first, by welcoming friends who, standing between her daughter's generation and her own, may be really common to both; and secondly, by making an effort to read the literature of the day, even when not congenial. It is almost impossible to supervise the reading of a girl who reads much and quickly, especially if when she leaves school she stays much away from home. But if the mother will keep pace with her reading, praising and discussing wholesome books, suggesting safe novels, the girl will be very willing probably to be guided by her taste, and the mother's real generosity in allowing the girl to have her own opinions and trust in the girl's good sense and good taste will be rewarded. For it does need generosity in a parent to allow a son or daughter intellectual freedom, to resist the temptation to use the unfair argument, "when you are older you will think differently," to put aside the desire to force a certain uniformity. But the reward is great, not only in the greater interest and wider views gained by the whole household, but in the fact that intellectual sympathy will be sought in the home, not elsewhere. Magnanimity is even more required perhaps in trusting girls to work out their own principles, not *fussing* about their application in detail—an attitude which is so fatal to the growth of a strong healthy character, which if successful is so apt to lead to

priggishness and Pharisaism, if unsuccessful, to nagging and friction. To take a prosaic instance, if a girl is habitually unpunctual, it is so much better to say at long intervals, "I am disappointed in your want of responsibility, to me it seems weakness of character" and then to recognise her struggle to improve, to expect and encourage it, rather than to draw attention to every lapse.

It is impossible to overstate the necessity of respecting a girl's principles where they really differ, never forcing her conscience into the parents' mould, above all, never quenching her enthusiasm, however misplaced it may seem, by the slightest approach to a sneer, but listening with interest, however trivial the occasion may seem. Where her principles allow greater freedom, *e.g.*, in such a matter as that of Sunday observance, she may very rightly be asked to give up her liberty of action voluntarily and encouraged to do so cheerfully, and her exercise of individual opinion will be safeguarded if she can learn to develop as strong a sense of loyalty to the home-life as the modern girl learns so readily to give to her school, her college, her club. The ideal is that the daughter should go out into her own interests, developing thought and character for herself, and come home to contribute them to the family life, neither absorbed in them in silence, nor inflicting details on unwilling hearers.

And all that is true of any sort of intellectual interest is surely most true in regard to the religious life. Here above all, it is essential to allow true liberty of conscience, to respect the individuality, to avoid losing the confidence by the fatal error of trying to force it. The best type of English girl is often intensely reserved in any expression of religious feeling, intensely shy of showing any to those nearest and dearest to her. Yet every mother ought to be, if necessary, a mother-confessor, and both will lose much if she cannot be so. It is very sad to hear girls say as they do: "I am glad to consult you on these points because you see I could never speak to mother about them." And here again the mother will have to sacrifice prejudices if she is to have any real influence. She must meet questions of the Higher Criticism herself if she is to help her daughter to meet them. She must recognise that each age has its own way of expressing religious feeling. She

must cling to the essential agreements and make little of the accidental differences; she may have to restrain her own expression of feeling in respect for her daughter's reserve, or to break through her own reserve in sympathy with her child's more demonstrative expression.

But in this as in all else she may lose her influence most surely by fearing to lose it—that fear which makes cowards of so many good women and which under the appearance of anxious conscientiousness is really want of faith in God and want of trust in the child. It is a truism of history that a mother's example and influence are the most important factors of life, because they make the tone of the home. The girl's character will grow by the discipline of the regular and responsible habits formed there; her attitude towards questions of morality will be formed by the conversation, reading and social customs permitted there, her whole view of life will depend on the spirit ruling there. It is no wonder that a mother should be overwhelmed by the responsibility, yet her influence is God-given, and for her above all is the encouragement (even, if at the worst, her daughter seems sunk in a spiritual and moral sloth worse than death) "Fear not, only believe." So most surely will come the sequel, "Daughter, I say to thee arise."

WAS DANTE A MUSICIAN?

BY REV. PERCY L. WATCHURST, B.D.

IN one of Robert Browning's most imaginative poems (*One Word More*. To E.B.B. 1855), he tells us that Rafael wrote a hundred sonnets, and that Dante once prepared to paint an angel. The idea grows out of his beautiful thought expressed later in the poem that every man, even the meanest, has two sides to his nature; "one to face the world with, one to show a woman when he loves her." Rafael's matchless Madonnas were for all the world to see and wonder at, his sonnets were for one only, his heart's true love.

Dante's Divine Comedy was written for all men and for all ages, his painted angel was for the eyes of Beatrice alone, and as he dreams of that unpainted picture of the Florentine poet, Browning says we would rather see that angel than read a fresh *Inferno*.

If instead of thinking of Dante as an artist, he had described him as a musician, Browning's imagination would have had some solid facts to work upon. It is curious that the wonderful use which Dante makes of music is so little noticed by the commentators. Indeed, one may read many books on Dante without finding a single reference to the subject.

In Dean Plumptre's six volumes, one or two significant sentences are all that can be found, and in Dean Church's exhaustive essay, so profound in its insight, so perfect in its expression, no mention is made of the many passages in which Dante makes such exquisite use of musical illustration.

Every reader of the *Paradiso* is struck with the marvellous way in which Dante describes light, light in the changing heavens, light in the wings and in the faces of the angels, light in the eyes of Beatrice, until at last his own powers, exercised by reason of use, are made strong enough to gaze upon the supreme Vision, the vision of Him who is Light of Light. And yet the references to music, not only in the *Paradiso* but also in the *Purgatorio*, are not less frequent, and